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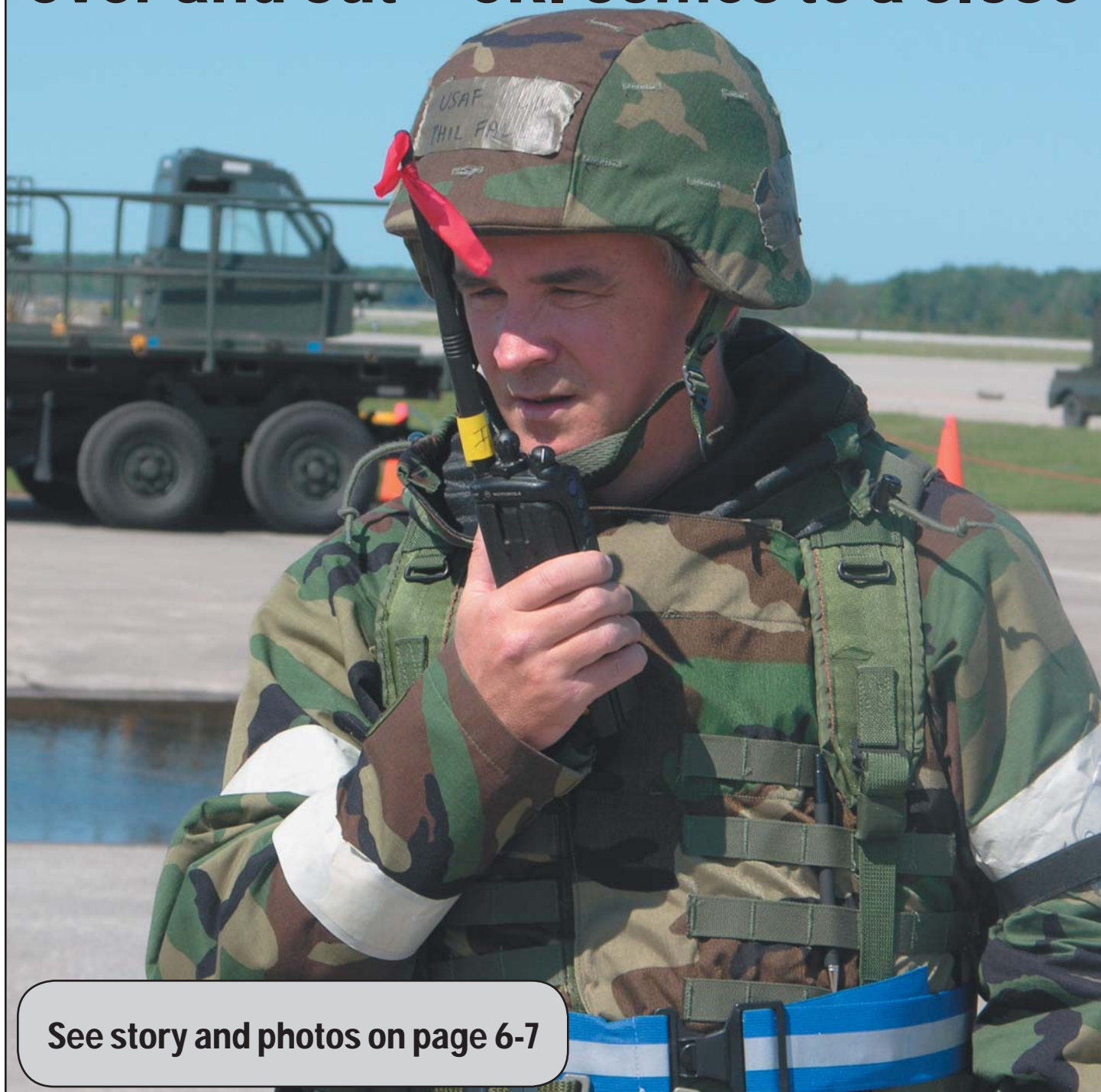


916th Air Refueling Wing

U.S. Air Force Reserve

Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.

Over and out -- ORI comes to a close



See story and photos on page 6-7

Wright Flyer

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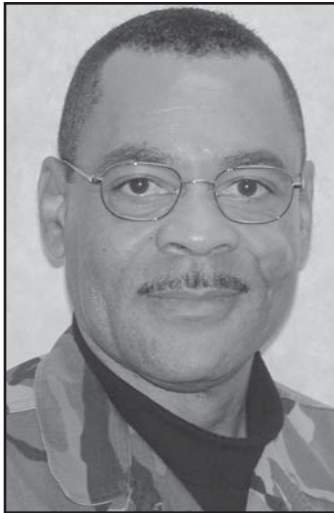
Front photo



Photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Mathews

Col. Phil Fallin talks to the command center during the Operational Readiness Inspection. During the ORI Colonel Fallin was the commander of the 612th Air Expeditionary Wing. Here at the 916th Air Refueling Wing he is the vice commander.

"Parting is such sweet sorrow"



Chief Master Sgt Thomas E. Smith
916th ARW Command Chief Master Sergeant

It has been a grand life and it has been an honor and privilege to have served you as your Command Chief Master Sergeant. My retirement will bring to close a career that covered three and-a-half decades; I want to thank each and every one of you for volunteering to serve our country, for fighting the Global War on Terror and for working so hard to keep our

command chief. After several unit deployments in support of Operations Desert Shield and Storm, Northern and Southern Watch, Enduring and Iraqi Freedom and many other campaigns and challenges to include but not limited to 9-11, I believed then and even more now that you are the best enlisted force in the world! As I worked with you, played with you, ran with you, trained with you, worshiped with you and witnessed the magnificent feats that you all accomplished I am even more reminded of just how great you all are.

Your technical skills along with the pride and professional attitude that you display are the primary reason for the success that we here at the 916th ARW have so much enjoyed. You have won awards in just about every category for example: Capt. Thaddeus Janicki – Outstanding Young American Award, SMSgt Bruce Koss – Communications and Informa-

tion mand Large Command Post of the year. Our medical unit cited for best practices, and received an "excellent" rating with a score of 89 out of a possible 100 during their HSI inspection. Our maintenance group, which always stands out, received ratings of "excellent" for their EORI initial response and aircraft generation. Recognition from the 4th Air Force Maintenance Standardization team visit left us with statements like "...TODO office has outstanding process controls in place...the attitude and courtesy of the personnel are highly commendable...capable leadership is in place to resolve the issues identified...Team Seymour successfully processed 104 personnel, while generating five KC-135 aircrafts..." Just simply amazing!

In this Global War on Terror we as reservists have and are playing a vital role in the success of the Air Force's mission in being able to deploy anyplace and at anytime to

Positive and pro-active leadership is imperative, the young, intelligent, energetic, multi-tasked and willing to do new Airmen will be a success if we as senior leadership (officer and enlisted) take them, train them and guide them.

Air Force Reserve strong and mission ready.

I have had the distinct privilege to have been with the 916th Air Refueling Wing from its inception (20 years) first as a first sergeant and then as the

tion Senior Noncommissioned Officer, SSgt Aaron Walker – Communications and Information Non Commissioned Officer all at the command level. Our command post – selected as the Air Force Reserve Com-

battle the fight to maintain the freedoms that we so very much enjoy today. If it were not for the Guard and Reserve forces the success of "taking the fight

See Smith on page 3

Letter to Airmen

Recognizing the total force

Congratulations! As a leader in the Total Force Integration the Air Force continues to benefit from one powerful, cohesive team formed by our Active Duty Airmen, Air National Guardsmen, and Air Force Reservists. In my travels around the Air Force, I see this synergy firsthand and realize our training and operations make it impossible to differentiate between the three components. Whether it is the C-17 landing in the combat zone or the mechanic working on F-16s in Vermont, the Total Force is making it happen.

We simply could not accomplish today's dynamic mission without the Total Force integration of our Guard, Reserve and Active Duty force. Gone are the "strategic reserve" days of the Guard and Reserve. Today, our total force sacrifices daily through extended deployments in the most challenging missions we have. As an integral part of this highly skilled

team, the Guard and Reserve train to the same high standards set by our Active Duty, operate the latest equipment and participate in every mission across the spectrum of operations.

Our Active Duty, Guard and Reservists stand side by side in the fight in the Global War on Terrorism. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the recent airstrikes that killed the leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Al Zarqawi. In Balad, the 332nd Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron mirrors where our Air Force is going: an Active Duty Commander, an Air National Guardsman as Operations Officer, and a Reservist as First Sergeant. The collective efforts of Active, Guard and Reserve forces continue to yield tremendous successes for the Joint Team and our Nation.

So what does this mean for you, the individual Airman? First, this means that we have a healthy

respect for those Total Force Members that support our mission. Second, we need to adhere to the set standards, to ensure that as we assemble the total force we remain prepared to execute the assigned mission.

Third, we need to use the diversity represented by the Total Force to continually look for better ways to accomplish our mission.

Total Force has moved from a future concept to today's reality. One team, one fight, with a shared, disciplined combat focus. The continued dedication and service of all Airmen — Active, Guard, and Reserve — make a grateful Nation proud. Thank you for all you do.



Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force

Smith

continued from page 2

to the enemy and defeating them" would not be possible. As I have said so many times before, the way we once conducted "business" is a thing of the past not only in distant lands but right here in our own back yard, right here in the good ole U. S. of A. As members of the 916th we are asked to lead the way in supporting this fight for freedom, by doing so each of you have become incredibly strong, smarter and forever increasing the desire to become the best at what we do.

In this Global War on maintaining our freedoms for generations to come, we must maintain our resolve and understand just as those that came before us that we have a responsibility to ensure that the future of this great Air Force stay on track

and have the resources, manpower and brainpower to continue to overcome the challenges that awaits the new Airmen that will replace each and everyone of us.

Positive and pro-active leadership is imperative, the young, intelligent, energetic, multi-tasked and willing to do new Airmen will be a success if we as senior leadership (officer and enlisted) take them, train them, guide them and understand that they are much smarter than we were at their age and have been exposed to far more than we were at that age.

We must accept this and use it in a positive way to achieve mission accomplishment, we must "train to maintain" this valued human resource, we must make them feel that they are "a part of the system and not a tool of the system." Give them ownership, share with them your goals and expectations, give them support and encouragement and

most of all give them **RESPECT**.

Our wing commander, Colonel Sykes, following the recommendations of the selection board selected Senior Master Sgt. Lester Boltinhouse to be your next command chief master sergeant of the 916th Air Refueling Wing. He is a very dedicated leader, driven by the very same values that the Air Force is built on; he has a remarkable ability to know what it takes to succeed. His strengths and character make him the right person for the job.

To that end I leave you, this wing and command in the best of hands. Stay focused on winning and taking care of each other (Wingman), and as outgoing Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Chief Gerald Murray stated "...As Airmen, we can measure our success not in dollars, rank or recognition, but in the ability to make a difference in someone else's life..." Best wishes to each of you and most of all your families.

News Briefs

New virtual reality

Americans are relying more and more on the Web, and that's affecting the way the Air Force does business.

As a result, Air Force Reserve officials are urging people to create a new account on vPC-GR to receive e-mails about what services are being offered to them.

Reservists can do that by visiting the Air Reserve Personnel Center Web site – <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil> – and clicking on the vPC-GR logo.

One change, slated to have started July 31, allows people to apply for retirement online instead of visiting a military personnel flight and completing paperwork in person.

Unrival wingman aimpoints

To help realize its vision, the Air Force Reserve is focusing on six aimpoints that make Airmen unrival wingmen. They are:

Proactive force planning – Optimizing ways to employ the force and advocate processes and improvements that make everyone more combat effective.

Flexible in participation – Organizing participation options to maximize combat readiness.

Combat ready – Preparing not only to come alongside, but also to take the lead as needed.

Operational in peace and war – Enhancing and enabling the key attributes that make the Air Force Reserve operational in peace and war.

Leveraged community connections – Connecting to communities, not just tied to them. The Air Force Reserve will leverage these connections to maximize participation over a lifetime of military and civilian service.

Clear participation expectations – Eliminating disconnects between what is re-

quired and what is expected.

Political activities

With primary elections underway and general elections in November, Air Force Reserve people probably should brush up on the rules that govern involvement in political activities.

While the rules that apply to active-duty military members do not always affect reservists and Department of Defense civilians, it is important to know when and where these rules do apply.

According to the Air Force instruction that lays out rules on participation in political activities by Air Force members, Airmen in the active-duty Air Force and Air Force reservists on active duty for 30 days or more have the greatest number of restrictions.

Military people can go to AFI 51-902, Political Activities by Members of the U.S. Air Force. Civilian employees can refer to a May 31, 2006, memorandum signed by the deputy secretary of defense.

The memorandum is about Civilian Employees' Participation in Political Activities. It's on the Web at www.defenselink.mil/dodge/defense_ethics/.

Impact on RIMPAC

Air Force reservists from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., traveled to the Pacific theater in July to take part in RIMPAC, a large-scale, biennial, multinational exercise.

Aircrews and aircraft maintainers from Air Force Reserve Command's 507th Air Refueling Wing, along with four wing KC-135 aircraft, participated in the sea mobility exercise.

Seven Pacific Rim nations and the United Kingdom sent 40 ships, six submarines and more than 150 aircraft off the coast of Ha-

waii. RIMPAC is designed to enhance the tactical capabilities of participating units in major aspects of maritime operations.

ARPC contract center

Air Reserve Personnel Command is open for business during the unit training assemblies (first) weekend each month – 9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Eastern. On-line services are available 24/7. They offer such services as:

- Twenty-year letter
- Board counseling
- Correct duty history
- Correct points history
- Current awards and decorations

- Current points
- DD 214 request
- EPR/OPR request
- FAQs
- Letter to the board
- Mortgage letter
- New request
- NGB 22 request
- Personnel data update
- RCSBP election
- Retired pay assistance
- Retirement application
- RIRP request
- Tricare reserve select

To take advantage of these services, please ensure all of your personnel have vPC-GR accounts. Reservists can create account or use these services by visiting the vPC-GR at <https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/support/default.asp>.

New role for civilians

In the Air Force's current climate of shared leadership, civilians are finding new opportunities to fill positions that have historically been held by military officers. One indication of this shift was a change in Air Force policy in June. Civilians designated to lead units, excluding flight commanders, are now authorized to sign the commander review block on enlisted performance reports.

The Air Force did not change its policy on requiring first sergeants to review enlisted performance reports.

Officials said the Air Force will publish an interim change to Air Force Instruction 36-2406, Officer and Enlisted Evaluation Systems, to reflect the change in policy.

Uniform board to release updates to AFI

An update to Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Air Force Uniform Dress and Appearance, has been released.

A key feature of this updated instruction will be the return of heritage to the enlisted corps — chevrons on the sleeves and circles around the U.S. insignia. The change will include the removal of senior NCO shoulder boards from the blue uniform and from all upper garments, except the optional wool sweaters. Implementation dates will be reflected in the revised AFI. The updates will also include information about the new air staff badge and new space badge. Desert combat uniforms are now only authorized on civilian flights to and from the area of responsibility. Also, Air Force personnel are not authorized to wear desert boots with the battle dress uniform.

Oct. 1 marks the mandatory wear of physical training gear. All Airmen will be required to have one running suit, two T-shirts and two pair of shorts. Also beginning in October, enlisted Airmen will receive an increase in their clothing allowance to offset the increase of the mandatory number of T-shirts and shorts from two sets to three sets in October 2007.

More clarification will be provided about sister service badges, as well as cell phone use in uniform.

New guidance about the wear of flight clothing also is incorporated in the updated document.

For more information, read the Air Force Print News Story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123023298>.

Retirement application process centralized

Beginning July 31, all eligible members of the Air Force Reserve will submit retirement applications electronically via the virtual Personnel Center Guard and Reserve, a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week customer service Web portal operated by the Air Force Reserve Personnel Center.

This new Web-enabled service is available at any time from anywhere in the world and will give Airmen the ability to monitor the status of their application from start to finish. For more info log on the vPC-GR at <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/support/default.asp> to begin the process.

Air Force Ball

The Air Force Ball, sponsored by the 4th Fighter Wing, 916th Air Refueling Wing and the Military Affairs Committee will be held on Sep. 16 at the enlisted club.

The Air Force Band's Blue Aces will be the featured musical guest, and a DJ will be on hand to provide more music to keep your toes tapping late into the night.

Tickets will go on sale Aug. 1. For technical sergeants and below, the ticket price is \$17 for chicken and \$22 for filet. For master sergeants and above, the ticket price is \$27 for chicken and \$32 for filet.

Club members will receive a \$2 discount on the price of their tickets.

Newcomers

Maj. Karen M. Baskin
916th MXS

Capt. Angela L. Sox
916th AMDF

1st Lt. Erin H. Pritchard
916th SVF

Senior Airman Michael Edmonson
916th AMXS

Senior Airman Daniel R. Moore
716th CF

Senior Airman Shannon P. Quigley
916th CF

Senior Airman Justin Todman
916th AMXS

Senior Airman Kendal D. White
716th CF

Airman 1st Class Courtney D. Wright
916th SFS

Airman James E. Roberson
916th OSF

Awards

Senior NCO of the Quarter (April – June 2006)
Senior Master Sgt. Bruce J. Koss
716th CF

NCO of the Quarter (April – June 2006)
Staff Sgt. Charles S. Alford
716th CF

Airman of the Quarter (April – June 2006)
Senior Airman Veronica L. Jefferson
716th CF

Monthly schedule September - October 2006

September

Sep 6-10
Air Force Reserve
Command Band
Visit

Sep 9-10
Unit training
assembly

Sep 9
Family Day Picnic
916th Security
Forces
Squadron new
building ribbon
cutting ceremony

Sep 10
Spouse flight
Sep 10-23
716th
Communications

Flight Jump Start
deployment

Sep 11-15
4th Fighter Wing
Phase II Exercise
Sep 16

Air Force Ball
Sep 17-18
916th Civil Engineer
Squadron Fire
Department
Alternate unit
training assembly

October
Oct. 15-16
Unit training
assembly
Oct. 30 – Dec. 8
Guam AEF

FY 06-07 Training Schedule

| Mo | Sat | Sun |
|-------|-----|-----|
| SEPT | 9 | 10 |
| OCT | 21 | 22 |
| NOV | 4 | 5 |
| DEC | 2 | 3 |
| JAN | 6 | 7 |
| FEB | 10 | 11 |
| MARCH | 10 | 11 |
| APR | 14 | 15 |
| MAY | 5 | 6 |
| JUNE | 9 | 10 |
| JULY | 21 | 22 |
| AUG | 4 | 5 |
| SEPT | 8 | 9 |

It's finally over!

Operational Readiness Inspection closes door on a year of hard work

by Capt. Shannon Mann
Chief, Public Affairs

“War is hell.”
Gen. William T. Sherman had it right, but even preparing for war is no easy task. Just talk to 3,500 members of the 916th Air Refueling Wing and the 439th Airlift Wing and they’ll tell you exactly how hard it can be to prepare. In early August these two Reserve wings wrapped up more than a year’s worth of planning and preparation as they completed their Operational Readiness Inspection in Alpena, Mich. More than 800 reservists deployed

to the training site, but the inspection was a conscious effort of all personnel from both wings. For nearly a week, roughly 30 areas were not just reviewed, but put under a microscope by Air Mobility Command inspectors. Many deployers said this was the hardest inspection they’d ever gone through in their entire careers. The black hats of the inspector team could be seen around the clock at both bases and in Alpena...running wartime scenarios, testing the reservists ability to survive and operate and judging leadership abilities and tactics.

Mock missile attacks shook the base several times a day and sent Airmen into full chemical attire for upwards of four hours at a time in temperatures reaching into the 80s. But even while hiding under desks the work flow did not cease for a minute. A sense of urgency could be seen by all and demonstrating the ability to operate was of the utmost importance. When the smoke cleared and the ‘hostilities’ ended, a sigh of relief could be heard as people shed the 40 pounds of

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Master Sgt. Jill Weissflog checks over her classified information while a member of the 612th Air Expeditionary Wing looks on. Sergeant Weissflog is chief of personnel employment with the 916th Mission Support Flight.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Mathews



A member of the 612th Air Expeditionary Wing works at the gun clearing station.



Capt. Nealy Brown gives some encouraging words to members of the 612th Air Expeditionary Wing during the Operational Readiness Inspection. Captain Brown is a chaplain with the 916th Air Refueling Wing.



Members of the 612th Air Expeditionary Wing drink from their canteens to make sure they don't get dehydrated.



Senior Master Sgt. Sean Martin receives word that the ORI is over. Sergeant Martin is a boom operator supervisor with the 916th Operations Group.

ORI

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gear they’d been physically attached to for more than 48 hours. Now the task was packing up and going home – still under the watchful eyes of the inspectors. Less than a week later both units would learn that their hard efforts paid off and they met the standards of the IG team. A few areas faired very well and a

few needed more work, but overall the wings were ready to go to war. Col. Phil Fallin, vice wing commander for the 916th Air Refueling Wing and commander for the combined wing during the inspection told members of the 916th “I think the results are very valid and this is an accurate report,” he said. “I’m proud of you and be proud of yourselves.” While the inspection wraps up more than a year’s worth of hard work, it

is only part of grading cycle that is constant. The next ORI for the wing is scheduled for 2010.



Base realignment and closure process

916th teams up with active duty in tanker partnership



by Senior Airman Matt Moorman
Staff writer

As part of the Air Force Total Force Integration initiatives, the Air Force Reserve Command is teaming up with the active duty Air Force to form an Active Associate KC-135 air refueling unit at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C.

Under the Base Realignment and Closure process, the Air Force Reserve's 916th Air Refueling Wing will keep its KC-135 aircraft, and the active duty Air Force will associate with the 916th.

The associate unit program started in 1968. Under the Classic Associate structure, reservists operate and maintain equipment with their active duty counterparts. This approach has been so success-

ful in recent years that the Regular Air Force has begun forming Active Associate units in partnership with unit-equipped Reserve organizations. By sharing equipment, they are able to train more people and make better use of the equipment.

"Associate units also make good business sense because they capitalize on the experience and skills of reservists, many of whom were on active duty before joining the Air Force Reserve," said Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command. "Through the associate unit programs, that training investment can be multiplied over and over as people come and go in a unit."

The addition of this new unit will be huge for both the base and the city of Goldsboro, said Col. Paul

J. Sykes, 916th Air Refueling Wing commander. "By merely having 200 active duty families move to Goldsboro makes a big [positive] impact on the economy," he said. "As far as the 916th is concerned, this addition means a greater ability to fulfill our refueling mission. We'll get more utility out of our mission here on a global scale."

This action will provide a mix of active and Reserve component experience at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.

Under the Active Associate unit concept, the active duty unit will share in flying and maintaining the KC-135s while the Reserve unit will retain principal responsibility for the aircraft.

Aircraft and personnel are projected to arrive as early as October 2007.

Words from admirers

Dear Colonel Sykes

It is with mixed emotions that I write to you today to tell you that my last day on Senator Burr's staff is Friday, July 28.

The hardest part of leaving my job is giving up the opportunities I had to participate in events and visit the military bases. I have more respect for the men and women who fight for our freedoms than anyone else in this country. I will miss tremendously bonding with the military personnel that I am so appreciative of.

I would like to thank you for your friendship and the courtesy you extended to me by allowing me to fly with the 916th. You are doing a tremendous job with the Air Refueling Wing and I was so lucky to spend a day with your crew.

Ryan Combs
Senator Richard Burr's Office

Dear Colonel Sykes

I would like to recognize Lt. Col. San Miguel for an exceptional performance of duty. Colonel San Miguel accepted an invitation to speak at our Annual Medical Conference at Ft. Fisher during the period of June 19-25.

His presentation on burn trauma was most informative and provided our medics required continuing education hours. Comments from the after action report reflect how very much our soldiers enjoyed his presentation.

It is evident from his enthusiasm

Colonel San Miguel clearly enjoys his work as a medical provider with the Air Force Reserve. Please express our sincere thanks to Colonel San Miguel, as we hope he will again be willing to be part of our conference next year.

Maj. William Graham
N. C. Army National Guard
Morrisville, N.C.

Dear Colonel Sykes

Please extend my thanks to Chief Master Dana Fazekas for the outstanding support she provided to our wing as an Exercise Evaluation Team member during our recent Operational Readiness Exercise.

Chief Fazekas worked with our Logistics Readiness Squadron folks from May 10-20 to not only help us improve our contingency operations procedures but prepare for our 2007 ORI.

Chief Fazekas provided realistic contingency training scenarios and thorough evaluation of the LRS's responses during Phase I and Phase II of the exercise. Her contribution to our mission was outstanding.

She shared freely her superior understanding of logistics readiness operations with squadron personnel, citing personal experiences supported by helpful reference to Air Force directives. She worked long hours to furnish meaningful formal and informal feedback that will be the cornerstone of a successful ORI for our LRS.

Her professionalism and dedica-

tion helped us complete a successful readiness exercise.

Col. Barry K. Coln
169th Fighter Wing Commander
McEntire Air Nation Guard
Eastover, S.C.

Dear Colonel Sykes

Congratulations! You have been nominated for a Downtown Goldsboro Development Corporation 2006 Annual Award.

The purpose of this event is to reflect on what has occurred downtown in the previous year, comment on accomplishments we hope to achieve in the upcoming year and acknowledge individual business or organizations that have helped downtown Goldsboro and/or the DGDC make downtown a better place.

In some capacity, you were recognized this year as helping to do that. You or your business was recognized as a DGDC Advocate of the Year Nominee, making you a potential candidate to win the DGDC Advocate of the Year Award at the DGDC Annual Dinner.

The winner of this category is defined as "Award is given to the person who most served downtown/DGDC by acting as a spokesperson throughout the community in support of downtown."

Julie M. Thompson
Executive Director
Downtown Goldsboro
Development Corp.

Chaplain services resume

Services will be held every Saturday of the unit training assembly.

- 916th Air Refueling Wing Bolen Room - 6 p.m.

Every Sunday of the UTA

- 916th Civil Engineer Squadron - 7:45 a.m.

- 77th Air Refueling Squadron tigertorium - 11:15 a.m.



Pilots pitch in to spruce up downtown

by Senior Airman Randy LeMay
Staff writer

Two members of the 916th Air Refueling Wing proved that sometimes it is better to be on the outside looking in, especially if this involves a police station.

Lt. Col. Matthew Young and Maj. Brian Davis, members of the 77th Air Refueling Squadron recently helped paint a mini satellite police station located at the corner of East Walnut and Center Street in downtown Goldsboro.

“The 77th showed some interest in doing a service project,” said Colonel Young. “With the shack needing painting, I thought it would help the Downtown Goldsboro Development Corporation and give the 77th a good service project to do.”

Colonel Young serves as a member of the DGDC. Although he has served as a volunteer on other projects such as the Center Street Jam, Colonel Young explained that this was the first involvement as a unit for a downtown improvement project.

The painting of the shack is one of many events planned by the DGDC. The DGDC provides leadership dedicated to the improvement of downtown Goldsboro.

Colonel Young explained that the best part of painting the shack was that everybody that came by was very proud and happy that they were doing it.

According to members of the DGDC, they have received great feedback on the project from department heads, the chief of police and the city manager.

The DGDC is sponsoring 27 projects throughout the year such as the Center Street Jams and many children’s events, said Julie Thompson, executive director of the DGDC.

“I think the DGDC is doing an excellent job,” said Colonel Young. “We have a master plan and once it is in place it will give us a road map to effectively use our money and time to revitalize downtown.”

Colonel Young said he’d like to see people volunteering more. He noted that just doing small things on occasion would help the town look better.



Photo courtesy of 77th Air Refueling Squadron

Maj. Brian Davis (wearing sun glasses) and Lt. Col. Matt Young take a break from painting the mini satellite police station in Goldsboro, N.C.

“Reservists come to us with open minds that are free of past perceptions of what downtown used to be like twenty years ago,” said Ms. Thompson.

The only way a community is going

to improve is if folks get involved and improve it, added Colonel Young.

To learn more about the revitalization of downtown Goldsboro, please call the DGDC at (919) 735-4959 or visit their website at www.dgdc.org.

Engineers and security forces team up in combat skills training

by Staff Sgt. Scotty Sweatt
916th SFS UPAR

The location is an undisclosed area in the Middle East. The mission is to conduct a convoy operation from home base to ‘Base B,’ an outpost in need of re-supply.

While en route to Base B, military members received information that the base was attacked and their convoy diverted. They were too far from home base to turn back, so they diverted to an abandoned U.S. Army Logistics Support area, they set-up defenses and awaited further instructions.

Sound like a story on the evening news? Well, it could be, but not this time.

This scenario did not actually play out in the Middle East; rather it is played out time and again right here on Seymour Johnson Air Force Base by the Expeditionary Combat Skills Training Program instructors as they train non-combat troops on combat skills potentially needed in the Area of Responsibility.

The ECST is a program developed to ensure that as security forces personnel are tasked with patrolling outside of the base perimeter, other career fields not normally tasked with direct combat operations have the skills to defend themselves and complete their missions. The program came into existence at Seymour Johnson about 18 months ago and is a mandated program for active duty units on Air Combat Command bases.

Major Jeffrey Poupart, commander of the 916th Security Forces Squadron noted that “It’s essential to have trained defenders ready to provide protection for each other and their work centers; everyone plays a part in integrated base defense.”

Recently, and for the first time, ECST instructors provided training for a 916th Air Refueling Wing squadron. The 916th Civil Engineer Squadron participated in a two day training program teaching them a number of valuable combat skills, including everything from convoy operations and handling opposing forces to dealing with local residents of a community.

Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Williams, cadre, said that the training scenario



Photo by Staff Sgt. Scotty Sweatt

Expeditionary Combat Skill Training instructors prepare members of the 916th Civil Engineer Squadron for their training scenario here at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. The training was held on the July unit training assembly.

was only about half scripted to allow for reactions based on the actions of the trainees. He gave an example of this training method, saying that if in the training scenario an otherwise friendly local chieftain from a nearby tribe visits the base and is treated rudely, aggressively and unprofessionally, that shortly after the encounter the base will be hit with mortar fire or a direct fire attack.

“We are ambassadors for the U.S., for democracy and for our way of life” said Sergeant Williams.

He said that he wanted persons going through the course to realize that while their primary responsibility is for the safety of their unit, that aggression is not always the best solution.

“We’re in their country” he added, “I try to think of it as reacting how I would want to be treated if it were someone in my country”.

The training was especially noteworthy for another reason as well as it being the first time reservists were trained. Many of the cadre came from the 916th SFS.

Sergeant Williams is also the 916th SFS operations superintendent, and teaches the course as part of his full-time job at the base.

“My two worlds collided and it

was the coolest thing,” said Sergeant Williams about his position.” Being a reservist myself, I was really happy to be training our people.”

He also noted that while the program is mandated by ACC and has existed primarily for training active duty personnel; his group was happy to oblige the Reserve wing and excited by the opportunity when approached by Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Jarvis, 916th CES, operations superintendent.

Civil Engineer members were very positive about the training they received during the July unit training assembly.

“The best training I’ve had in the eight years I’ve been here,” said Master Sgt. Robert Stephens, 916th CES, heating, air conditioning and refrigeration supervisor.

Many CE troops agreed the training needed to be completed yearly.

Senior Master Sgt. Timmy Smith, 916th CES, electrical systems superintendent, appreciated the training for his troops and had nothing but praise their motivation and for the professionalism of instructors, “I think it’s been excellent, it’s come around for the Reserve,” he said. “We need this, we’ve been needing this. They’ve (the instructors) done a great job, it was very well planned out.”

One final salute



Photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Mathews

Members of the 916th Air Refueling Wing and 439th Airlift Wing salute as the American flag passes by during a mock ceremony held at the Operational Readiness Inspection at Alpena, Mich.

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